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Executive Register
2-7288 X1

26 March 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director, Intelligence

FROM: Assistant Director, C&D

SUBJECT: Staff study on "Authentication of Facts"

REFERENCE: Your memo, subject as above, of 25 March 1952

1. I don't feel that I can offer much useful comment on subject staff study. I doubt that anyone could who had not been exposed to a good many IAC wrangles on matters of substance.

2. Coordinated production effort in the intelligence community is undoubtedly much to be desired. Perhaps a senior staff officer to the DD/I could be of real help in achieving this aim.

James M. Andrews

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25 March 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: AD/CD; AD/CI; AD/NE; AD/O; AD/RR; AD/SI
SUBJECT : Staff Study on "Authentication of Facts"

1. The subject Staff Study was prepared 19 March by AD/IC at the request of DD/I.
2. DD/I has requested that this study be considered by you (and the other IAD's) personally.
3. Will you please forward your comments on the Study to the undersigned?

Attachment

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[Redacted]
Executive Officer to DD/I

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RDD/mfc

Distribution:

- 1 cy to each Addressee
- ✓ 1 cc to AD/IC (for information) *w/o attachment*
- 1 cc to DD/I file
- 1 cc to Exec Reg

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[REDACTED]

19 March 1952

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Authentication of Facts

1. In response to your request there is attached (Tab A) a discussion of the problem of identification and authentication of facts in the production of intelligence. You may wish to distribute this paper for consideration at a meeting of your Assistant Directors.

2. In arriving at the proposal to establish a Chief of Production for the DD/I some tentative consideration was given to the related problem of the organization of the DD/I staff (Tab B). A brief statement of the possible duties of the Chief of Production appears as Tab C.

JAMES Q. REBER
Assistant Director
Intelligence Coordination

Return to JQR

JQR

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PROBLEM:

1. To provide more helpful, timely and reliable facts on which to base our National Intelligence Estimates.

DISCUSSION:

2. The chief criticism of our national estimates is that the facts on which conclusions are based are not revealed or if revealed are questioned. Where conclusions have had to be deduced in the absence of facts this has not always been made clear. While the dearth of factual information on the Soviet orbit is generally recognized and while inadequate collection is frequently made the whipping boy of highly speculative conclusions in estimates, collection as such is not the first place to look for a remedy though its proper role will become clear as the "problem of the available facts" is attacked and solved.

3. The problem of the Available Facts will be solved when we have asked the right questions of fact of the appropriate researchers and the answers have been authenticated. Not only will gaps be revealed which may in part be filled by additional research but also the gaps which must be filled by new collection will become more apparent. This should result in sharper and so more useful and manageable collection requests.

4. How can we get the right questions asked? First we must choose the proper subjects for national estimates and ensure that they are sufficiently tailored to current and anticipated policy problems. While the major members of the IAC are exposed in their departments to developing policy situations and will continue to provide advice to the estimating machinery, it is expected that further guidance in this regard will flow from arrangements which have been made with the NSC Senior Staff and the Director of the Joint Staff, JCS, to review proposed terms of reference of NIE's and offer criticism and suggestions in order to sharpen them relative to the needs of planners and policy makers. The current NIE production program should be examined periodically to be sure it is as complete and well-rounded as possible and that it provides maximum advance notice to the production offices regarding the subjects on which their support will be needed. Perhaps a section should be added listing possible NIE's which have been proposed or might be useful to undertake but have not yet been accepted for production.

5. Next we must make maximum use of the terms of reference of national estimates. In addition to the outline for the estimate as now written there should also be a precise statement of the principal "factual" questions on which the answers to the various sub-estimates logically depend. While the asking of the right questions, including the detailed questions, may be a cooperative venture or decentralized to the contributing organizations, nevertheless in view of ONE's leadership role in

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the estimating field it has the major responsibility for the success of the system. Since the other agencies are apparently not formulating the questions or answering them with sufficient precision or dependability, ONE should do what they can to improve their performance either by elaborating their present draft terms of reference by writing and getting agreement on subsidiary "factual" terms of reference, or by asking for separate memoranda on particular points.

6. In areas other than national estimates the same insistence on formulating as precisely as possible the right questions for intelligence support is the only salvation from the many pressures which squeeze "not enough researchers" with too many deadlines. The need for clear and precise thinking at this stage has been demonstrated by the very broad generalized requirements, almost encyclopedic in nature, which have frequently been served on intelligence units. The formulation of the right questions is part of the responsibility of each Assistant Director, administrator, staff officer or analyst in any of the IAC agencies. Organizational tools to assist him are the same as those used to authenticate the facts. (cf. paragraph 8)

7. What is involved in the authentication of facts? Those whose function is to estimate or to determine policy on the basis of estimates have a right not only to the facts behind the estimate but to the authentication of the most important facts. The authentication of facts involves (a) a clear, reasoned paper by the responsible official with some showing of credibility other than his known integrity; and (b) the concurrence of those other intelligence organizations with a pertinent responsibility or competence. The critical nature of the world struggle today and the dependence of our foreign and domestic policy on intelligence, demand that our facts be able to withstand criticism. Although the military and State departments have been given the responsibility for "military" and "political" intelligence (NSCID 3), the definition of these terms and the overlapping nature of related responsibilities give a joint character to many problems even in these fields. Without attempting to dispute the primary role of these agencies in their fields, their important facts can be examined by others operating under the aegis of national intelligence, current intelligence, economic or scientific intelligence, and perhaps even psychological intelligence and external research.

8. How can we get authenticated facts? This is the responsibility of each administrator and Assistant Director. Where the facts bridge several responsibilities joint preparation may be called for or a joint review after preparation and prior to publication. This is essentially the current practice of the Economic Intelligence Committee, of the JAEIC, and of the Watch Committee. A different set of facts might be the concern of a "Current Intelligence Committee" (primarily concerned with authenticating a Current Intelligence Review, quite apart from who drafted it), a "Psychological Intelligence Committee" and/or an "External Research

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Committee." While formal mechanisms come most easily to mind, the mention of them should not obscure the possibility and desirability of authenticating many of the facts through more informal or ad hoc means. Each of these areas should be examined separately with a view to determining the best arrangements for each.

9. What will be the effect on the research production offices? The producing offices are continually trying to staff themselves up to meet the demands being placed on them from various important quarters. Production of NIE's has already taken a considerable portion of the efforts of the agencies away from what they think they should be working on, from the demands of their own department (including SHAPE, FECOM, etc.), and from the NIS program. While some of these requests coincide and although our questions may be more important than some other demands, the agencies may be expected to resist a further "encroachment" on their time. We should recognize that the more insistent our demands become and the more we press for coordinated, authenticated papers, the more we are in effect exercising a control or direction (however incomplete and polite) over the production programs of the other agencies. This is probably the right direction in which to move, but to be successful it will need to be done gradually and with finesse and we should never expect to monopolize all the energies of the IAC agencies.

10. What steps should be taken to assist identification of questions and authentication of facts? Responsibility for these functions is so widely shared in the community that it is not felt that generally lecturing the community will produce much result. On the other hand, it would be impossible to alter radically the existing responsibilities. It would probably be possible and reasonably effective, however, to adopt a middle course and attempt to supply the leadership necessary to achieve a limited and voluntary coordination of production effort. This would be a delicate and continuing job but could be undertaken by a senior staff officer to the DD/I with the help perhaps of a couple of carefully selected people. Such a Chief of Production would be responsible for assisting the DD/I in his guidance of the substantive work of CIA and in his leadership of the IAC production community.

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DUTIES OF CHIEF OF PRODUCTION

As a staff arm of the DD/I he would:

1. Review and comment on the production programs and actual output of the CIA offices under the DD/I.
2. Maintain familiarity with the production programs and actual output of the other IAC agencies.
3. Advise the various production offices to the extent practicable so as to improve the timeliness, usefulness and reliability of the products of the Federal Intelligence System.
4. Exercise initiative and leadership with respect to social science research on foreign areas performed by or for any agency of the Government.

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